STATE RAIL PLAN GUIDANCE

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

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Summary

About this Guidance

This guidance provides an explanation of the process to be followed in developing State rail plans, FRA's procedure for review and acceptance, the standardized State rail plan format, a list of the minimum State rail plan content requirements, and requirements established by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA). An overview of PRIIA and the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program is also provided.

Effect on Existing State Rail Plans

States that completed State rail plans before the date of enactment of PRIIA, October 16, 2008, that substantially meet the requirements of PRIIA as determined by FRA (acting for the Secretary of Transportation), will be deemed accepted and eligible for capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA. Further, for State rail plans that were completed after the enactment of PRIIA and prior to this issued guidance, FRA will treat them as if they were completed prior to the enactment of PRIIA. Because State rail plans must be updated at least every five years, they will be reviewed and accepted by FRA on a rolling basis.

Outline of Required State Rail Plan Format

This guidance describes a standardized format for State rail plans as follows:

Executive Summary

- 1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)
- 2. The State's Existing Rail System
- 3. Trends and Forecasts
- 4. Rail Service Needs and Opportunities
- 5. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments
- 6. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments
- 7. The State's Long-Range Rail Service and Investment Program
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The standardized format and a detailed description for each chapter are provided in Section V of this document.

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I. Introduction

The U.S. Census estimates that by 2050, the nation will add another 100 million people, most of them in already-congested "megaregions." According to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) analysis, the American economy requires on an annual basis the movement of approximately 40 tons of freight per capita, meaning that 4 billion additional tons of freight will need to be transported by 2050, in addition to the significant increases in passenger travel generated by this population growth. At the national, regional, and state levels, proper planning and strategic investments in transportation infrastructure will be necessary to accommodate this growth and maintain America's global economic competitiveness and quality-of-life. Rail will play a pivotal role in the nation's transportation future, especially given the financial and environmental challenges associated with increasing capacity on other modes.

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA)(Public Law 110-432) reauthorized the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and strengthened the U.S. intercity passenger rail network by tasking Amtrak, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), FRA, States, and other stakeholders with improving service, operations, and facilities, and authorizing funding for these activities. Section 303 of PRIIA (codified as Chapter 227 of Title 49, U.S. Code) provides for enhanced State involvement in rail policy, planning, and development efforts, including requiring States to develop FRA-accepted State rail plans in order to be eligible for the capital grants authorized in the Act.² Of course, all such Plans must reflect both the primarily private ownership of the rail network and the fact that, in most cases, some form of private/public partnership arrangement must characterize State planning for and investment in that network.

In order to be eligible for these grants, PRIIA requires that a State establish or designate a State rail transportation authority to develop statewide rail plans to set policy involving freight and passenger (intercity and commuter) rail transportation within their boundaries, establish priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serve as the basis for Federal and State rail investments within the State. PRIIA requires USDOT to establish minimum standards for the preparation and periodic revision of State rail plans; FRA has developed this State Rail Plan Guidance to fulfill that requirement.

In brief, State rail plans should address a broad spectrum of issues, including an inventory of the existing passenger and freight rail transportation system, rail services, and facilities within the State. Plans should also include an explanation of the State's passenger and freight rail service goals and objectives in the context of the State's overall transportation system; an analysis of

¹ The "Megaregion" concept was addressed on page 5 of FRA's 2010 National Rail Plan Progress Report.

² Although PRIIA requires a State to have a rail plan to be eligible for the capital grants authorized in the Act, Congress has made exceptions and, for example, waived this requirement when appropriating funds for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5, enacted February 17, 2009) as well as the FY 2010 appropriations act (Public Law 111-117, enacted December 16, 2009).

rail's public benefits to the State; and a long-range investment program for current and future freight and passenger rail infrastructure in the State. The plans are to be coordinated with other State transportation planning programs and clarify long-term service and investment needs and requirements. Wherever appropriate, State rail plans should also be coordinated with the transportation planning programs of neighboring States and others within the megaregion.



II. Overview of PRIIA and the State Rail Plan Requirement

The enactment of PRIIA served to strengthen the U.S. passenger rail network by encouraging a long-term view of the rail system and the potential benefits that flow to the public by including rail into the statewide transportation planning process. PRIIA also recognized the necessity of implementing rail investments in concert with the primarily private owners and operators of the rail network. While PRIIA authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to make grants to assist in the financing of capital costs to improve intercity passenger rail transportation, it also considers the important role commuter rail and freight rail play in meeting the transportation needs of the Nation. Therefore, States should address all types of passenger and freight rail service in formulating their State rail plans.

A. State Rail Plan Requirement

Under Section 303 of PRIIA, States must develop their State rail plans according to specific requirements in order to be eligible for high-speed and intercity passenger rail capital assistance grants authorized in Section 301 and Section 501 of PRIIA. Candidate high priority corridors for congestion grants (Section 302) must be included in the State rail plan. In sum, the preparation of a State rail plan enables project eligibility under these capital grant programs authorized by this legislation.³

Aside from being a prerequisite for Federal funding eligibility, the State rail plan also presents the opportunity to develop strategies and policies for enhanced passenger and freight rail service that can benefit the public at large. There are many public benefits from rail that can be calculated. A broad view of these public benefits should encompass how rail transportation can improve transportation safety, economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, state of good repair, and livability. These represent the Department of Transportation's strategic goals which are in parallel with the legislative language where "a benefit accrued to the public, including Amtrak [is] in the form of enhanced mobility of people or goods, environmental protection or enhancement, congestion mitigation, enhanced trade and economic development, improved air quality or land use, enhanced public safety or security, transportation efficiency or infrastructure preservation, and any other positive community effects as defined by the Secretary[.]"

FRA encourages all States to develop State rail plans, including those that do not intend to pursue Federal funding for rail capital projects.

³ Intercity passenger rail projects funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and by the Fiscal Year 2009 and 2010 Transportation Appropriations Acts were exempted from the requirement for inclusion in applicable State plans.

B. Capital Grant Programs

PRIIA established three new competitive capital grant programs (Sections 301, 302, and 501) for funding high-speed and intercity passenger rail improvements, each of which, as authorized, requires a 20 percent non-Federal match. The grant programs are described below:

- Section 301 of the Act creates the framework for a new intercity passenger rail service corridor capital assistance program.
- Section 302 of the Act authorizes the appropriation of funds for "congestion grants" to States or to Amtrak (in cooperation with States) for capital projects to reduce train delay and increase ridership on high priority rail corridors.
- Section 501 of the Act authorizes the USDOT to establish and implement a high-speed rail corridor development program.

C. HSIPR Program and Funding

FRA's High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program (HSIPR) consolidates all three PRIIA-authorized grant programs into a single, coordinated program. The HSIPR program has been funded through four appropriations: the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and the Department of Transportation Appropriations Acts of 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Legislation	Date Enacted	Total Appropriation (\$M)	Amount Available for Planning Projects (\$M)
FY 2008	12/26/2007	\$30	\$3
FY 2009	3/11/2009	\$90	\$9
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act	2/17/2009	\$8,000	\$0
FY 2010	12/16/2009	\$2,100	\$50
TOTAL	n/a	\$10,220	\$62

While the amount of funding that could be used to advance planning efforts was limited in these appropriations, FRA recognizes the significant importance of planning to the long-term success of the HSIPR program, and has directed the maximum allowable amount to these activities. Roughly 10 percent of the available HSIPR planning funding (\$6.3 million) has been obligated to 11 States for the development of State rail plans.

III. State Involvement

The State role in State rail planning encompasses four primary responsibilities:

- Establishing a State authority to develop the State rail plan and designating officials with approval authority of the plan.
- Coordinating with other Statewide and metropolitan area transportation planning efforts.
- Involving the public and key stakeholders in the planning process.
- Coordinating with neighboring States, especially where multi-state corridors and transportation systems are involved.

A. State Authorities

In developing a State rail plan, PRIIA requires a State to establish or designate a "State Rail Transportation Authority" to ensure that the State rail plan documents the State's policy on freight and passenger rail transportation – including commuter rail – within the State's boundaries, establishes priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serves as the basis for Federal and State rail investment. The State Rail Transportation Authority is a State agency or official responsible, under the direction of the Governor of the State or a State law, for preparing, maintaining, coordinating, and administering the plan. Usually, the State Rail Transportation Authority is the State department of transportation.

The State is also required to establish or designate a State Rail Plan Approval Authority (SRPAA). This State agency or official reviews and provides final approval of the State Rail Plan. In most cases, the State Secretary of Transportation is designated as the authority that provides the final approval of the State rail plan.

B. Coordination with Statewide and Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning

Coordination of a State rail plan with other statewide transportation planning efforts and vice versa offers the potential for States to undertake public infrastructure investments that deliver the maximum public benefits because the full array of transportation options have been considered. PRIIA directs States to prioritize options to maximize service integration and efficiency between rail and other modes of transportation within the State [§ 22705(a)(8)]. State rail plans are an important part of a comprehensive approach to identifying and fulfilling a State's future transportation needs. Therefore, PRIIA requires States to coordinate State rail plan efforts with statewide transportation planning goals and programs and set forth policy for rail transportation's role within the State's transportation system. Statewide transportation plans shall prioritize public investment in rail transportation and ensure those investments are integrated with other State transportation plans and priorities.

Each proposed rail capital investment project in a State rail plan should be compatible with the statewide and metropolitan planning documents required under sections 23 U.S.C. §§ 134 and

135. These sections require each State to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a statewide and metropolitan long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs (metropolitan TIPs and statewide STIPs).

C. Public and Stakeholder Involvement

PRIIA requires States to involve public and private stakeholders – including the private railroads – in the development and review of the State rail plan. These stakeholders must be notified and provided the opportunity to comment on and provide input to the plan. As defined by PRIIA, these stakeholders include all freight and passenger rail (intercity and commuter rail) carriers and transit authorities operating in or affected by rail operations within the State, and units of local government. Stakeholders should also include major shippers, freight and passenger rail organizations, intercity bus operators, airlines, airport authorities, chambers of commerce, tourism organizations, and other public or private entities interested in improving rail services and multi-modal integration within the State. State Rail Plan Authorities shall work cooperatively with regional and municipal transportation and land use planning, environmental and economic development agencies; review their freight and passenger rail activities and initiatives; and consider their recommendations.

Internal coordination activities that provide consistency within a State DOT's statewide planning activities – in particular as planning divisions integrate modal plans into the statewide long-range transportation plan – should not be overlooked.

D. Coordination with Neighboring States

The railroad network and the flow of goods and passengers on trains routinely traverse State boundaries and support interstate commerce. Many intercity corridors serve multiple States and several metropolitan areas' existing or proposed commuter rail service straddle state boundaries. Therefore, it is necessary that State rail planning authorities coordinate their planning efforts with neighboring states. Multi-state rail plans can serve as visioning and strategy documents for improved passenger and freight rail networks. Within megaregions, FRA encourages States to participate in the development of multi-state rail plans in addition to the required State rail plan. However, it is necessary to coordinate State rail planning among neighboring States for facilities and services that cross (or could cross) state boundaries, and this need persists whether or not larger-scale regional multi-state planning processes have been established.

IV. Federal Involvement

PRIIA requires that the USDOT Secretary prescribe procedures for States to submit State rail plans for review, including a standardized format and data requirements. This requirement was delegated to FRA. FRA review of the initial State rail plan and subsequent five-year updates ensures the State of continuous eligibility for rail capital assistance authorized under PRIIA. Before awarding capital grants under Sections 301 and 501, the Secretary must verify that candidate projects are included in the State rail plan and that the plan includes the minimum content required by PRIIA.

FRA's role in State rail plans includes four primary responsibilities:

- Establishing minimum content requirements and a recommended format for the preparation, update, and submittal of State rail plans.
- Offering cooperative funding grant agreements to States for the completion of State rail plans and other planning activities.
- Coordinating State rail plans with national and multi-state rail planning efforts.
- Developing analytic tools that can be used by States and other stakeholders to develop State rail plans or other planning documents.
- A. Minimum Content Requirements, Recommended Format, and Submittal Guidelines

Acting for the Secretary, FRA is establishing with this guidance the minimum content and recommended format for preparation and periodic updates of State rail plans. This guidance also establishes the process for submitting a State rail plan for FRA review and acceptance. Additional information on these issues can be found in Sections 5 and 6.

B. FRA Cooperative Funding Agreements with States

FRA funds State rail plan development efforts through cooperative agreements. FRA selects these planning projects for funding through a competitive selection process initiated with an FRA issued notice of funding availability. This contractual arrangement allows FRA to work closely with States throughout the planning process, which enables FRA to shorten the amount of time required to review the final plan. Therefore, the timeline for review of State rail plans developed through cooperative agreements is shorter than for those developed without FRA assistance.

C. Coordination of State Rail Plans with Multi-State Planning Efforts and the National Rail Plan

PRIIA and HSIPR funds have enabled two other large-scale rail planning efforts led by FRA. First, Section 307 of PRIIA directed the Administrator of FRA to develop a long-range National Rail Plan consistent with both approved State rail plans and the rail needs of the Nation. FRA released a Preliminary National Rail Plan in October 2009 and a National Rail Plan Progress

Report in September 2010. The findings and recommendations from State rail plans and multistate regional rail plans will be used to inform future iterations of the National Rail Plan.

Second, planning funds made available under the FY2010 HSIPR program appropriation permitted the Secretary of Transportation to retain a portion of those funds for federally-led multi-state planning projects. Two multi-state planning studies are currently underway – one in the Northeast and one in the Southwest.

The National Rail Plan and the multi-state planning studies are furthering development of megaregional frameworks for rail corridor and network planning that cross State lines. These planning studies aim to identify optimized plans for the development of integrated regional networks. The individual corridors comprising those networks are studied through service-level NEPA documents (e.g., Tier 1) and Service Development Plans (SDP) to determine alignments, service characteristics, and the improvements required to operate the proposed service, with consideration for the role the corridor plays in the current and planned regional network. The results of these broader planning efforts – particularly multi-state studies and SDPs – should be considered in future State rail plans. Likewise, it is envisioned that projects identified in State rail plans should be adopted into multi-state and national plans as they are developed.

D. Application of FRA-Developed Planning Tools

FRA is developing several planning tools and analyses to support both State and regional rail planning efforts. These tools will provide "best practice" methodologies and approaches for rail planning based on both domestic and international experiences. The FRA is currently creating a sketch-planning tool to identify potential corridors, model ridership demand, and estimate capital and operations and maintenance (O&M) costs for intercity passenger rail networks – primarily at the multi-state and megaregional level. The toolkit will include data on intercity market demand between metropolitan areas over 40+ years, capital and operating cost data for various rail service types, financial performance metrics, and network analysis capabilities.

V. Standardized Format and Data Requirements

State rail plans are to include a comprehensive description and assessment of a State's current rail system, an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the State's transportation system, and a vision of the future passenger and freight rail system in the State. The State rail plan should also describe how that vision is integrated into planning for the overall transportation system for the State. The State rail plan shall include a Long-Range Service and Investment Program (LRSIP) that provides guidelines and lists the rail investment needs to achieve the State's vision for the rail system.

PRIIA Section 303 (codified at 49 U.S.C. § 22705) requires that State rail plans address twelve minimum content areas and provide a Long-Range Service and Investment Program. These content areas are addressed in the standardized format and listed for reference in Appendix 1. A list of additional FRA-required data follows in Appendix 1.

The following represents the required standardized format for State rail plans:

Outline of Standardized State Rail Plan Format

Executive Summary

- 1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)
- 2. The State's Existing Rail System
- 3. Trends and Forecasts
- 4. Rail Service Needs and Opportunities
- 5. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments
- 6. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments
- 7. The State's Long-Range Rail Service and Investment Program
- 8. Coordination and Review

Executive Summary: A summary that highlights State rail plan findings, facts and the long-range service and investment program.

Chapter 1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)

Objective: Illustrate the current and proposed future role of rail in the State's multimodal transportation system. Describe how the State is organized to provide political, legal, and financial support to rail development.

- 1.1 The State's goals for the multimodal transportation system.
- 1.2 A conceptual analysis of rail transportation's role within the State's transportation system. [§ 22705(a)(1)]

- 1.3 A description of the institutional governance structure of the State rail program(s) including: State rail transportation authorities, SRPAA, State and local agencies involved in delivering rail services, such as transit agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and State authorizing (and limiting) laws and powers for planning, funding, and operating rail services; and a statement that the State is in compliance with the requirements of Section 22102 (which stipulates eligibility requirements for a long-established FRA rail freight grant assistance program pertaining to State planning and administration). [§ 22705(a)(12)]
- 1.4 A description of the State's authority for grant, loan, and public/private partnership financing; how the State has used these authorities in the past; State revenue sources that are dedicated to rail funding (if any); and how much the State has provided in funding over the past five years.
- 1.5 A summary of the freight and passenger rail services, initiatives and plans sponsored by State rail transportation authorities, regional planning agencies, regional transportation authorities, and municipalities within the State, or in the region in which the State is located, that have been considered while preparing the plan. A summary of services, initiatives, and plans of private sector railroads, as well as connections between rail services and other modes in the State transportation system, to the extent known to the State, are to be included here as well. [§ 22705(a)(11)]

Chapter 2. The State's Existing Rail System

Objective: Provide an overview and inventory of the State's existing rail system as a baseline for planning and decision making.

Describe the following in text, maps, tables, and graphics for the existing rail system:

- 2.1 The existing freight, intercity passenger, and commuter rail transportation system, services currently operating, operating objectives, and system performance, including: a review of all rail lines and corridors, existing and proposed for freight, commuter, and intercity passenger service, including high speed lines as well as railway assets currently out of service or rail banked. Ownership of and operating rights over each segment of the railroad network, whether private or public, is to be clearly identified. [§ 22705(a)(1), (2)]
- 2.2 Major freight and passenger terminals and stations that serve as intermodal connections, including seaports and airports. [§ 22705(a)(8)]
- 2.3 Objectives for the passenger rail services operating within the State, including minimum service levels by route, including service frequency, capacity, and projected ridership. [§ 22705(a)(3)]

- 2.4 A performance evaluation of intercity passenger services operating in the State (both interstate and intrastate services) [§ 22705(a)(10)] according to metrics such as those established under PRIIA Section 207: FRA Metrics and Standards for Intercity Passenger Service. Identify possible improvements in existing services and a describe strategies to achieve those improvements). [§ 22705(a)(10)]
- 2.5 A statement on public financing for rail projects and service in the State, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail operations and infrastructure development. This section should also address existing challenges to State investment or involvement in rail transportation as posed by the State's constitution, laws, or regulations, or by implementation of current or proposed federal regulations. [§ 22705(a)(6)]
- 2.6 Ongoing programs and projects intended to improve the safety and security of rail transportation, including all major projects funded under section 130 of Title 23. [§ 22705(a)(9)]
- 2.7 A general analysis of rail transportation's economic, and environmental impacts in the State including, but not limited to, congestion mitigation, safety impacts, trade and economic development, air quality, land use, energy use, and community impacts. [§ 22705(a)(4)]

Chapter 3. Trends and Forecasts

Objective: Describe the trends that will impact the need for rail in the State.

Describe trends and forecasts for demographic, economic and transportation demand growth in the State and for the likely demand for freight and passenger (intercity and commuter) rail service, including:

- 1) Demographic and Economic growth factors, including:
 - o Population.
 - o Employment.
 - o Personal income.
 - Industrial outlook by sector.
- 2) Freight demand and growth by type of service, e.g. intermodal, commodity, manifest.
- 3) Passenger travel demand and growth.
- 4) Fuel cost trends.
- 5) Highway and airport congestion trends.
- 6) Land use trends.

Chapter 4. Rail Service Needs and Opportunities

Objective: Identify the needs and opportunities for passenger and freight rail service in the State.

Based on the findings of Chapters 1 through 3, summarize the key issues, service gaps, improvement needs, including connectivity to other modes, and financial deficits facing the State's rail system. Identify the opportunities to address those issues, gaps, needs, and deficits for freight, intercity, and commuter rail.

Chapter 5. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments

Objective: Describe the improvements and investments that could address the passenger rail needs of the State.

For the intercity and commuter passenger opportunities described in Chapter 4, describe in summary terms all passenger rail proposals under consideration, including new services, station improvements, improved intermodal connections to other passenger modes, state of good repair projects, rolling stock improvements, and unfunded concepts. Identify projects as service changes or physical improvements and whether they are improvements or new additions to the existing rail network in the State. Organized by corridor and type of service (i.e. intercity, commuter or both), describe how each proposal would address gaps in service and financial deficits identified in Chapter 4, identify potential operating subsidies and sources, identify efforts to mitigate external costs (e.g. noise and grade crossing closures), and reference relevant studies and reports.

Chapter 6. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments

Objective: Describe the improvements and investments that could address the freight rail needs of the State.

For the freight opportunities described in Chapter 4, describe in summary terms all freight rail proposals under consideration, including intermodal interfaces. Identify projects as service changes or physical improvements and whether they are improvements or new additions to the existing rail network in the State. Organized by railroad company and corridor, describe how each proposal would address the gaps in service, financial needs, and options for improvement identified in Chapter 4 and reference relevant studies and reports.

Chapter 7. The State's Long-Range Rail Service and Investment Program [§ 22705(a)(7)]

Objective: Describe the State's long-term vision for rail service and its role in the statewide multimodal transportation system. Prioritize the specific projects, programs, policies, laws, and funding necessary to achieve that vision and describe their financial and physical impacts.

The Long-Range Rail Service and Investment Program (LRSIP) is a critical component of the State rail plan. Essentially, it is the "action plan" component of the State rail plan that lays out the State's 20-year vision for the passenger and freight rail system and how that vision will be implemented and integrated with other statewide and regional transportation plans. The LRSIP

will recommend improvements to achieve the vision, including an estimate of investment needs and benefits resulting from those investments.

Improvements identified in the LRSIP are strongly encouraged to be incorporated into Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs, in keeping with the applicable regulations and interpretations of the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. The LRSIP will also detail potential approaches to funding and financing the improvements and suggest policy and programmatic changes such as refining existing rail programs and institutional responsibilities for rail service and infrastructure development. The LRSIP shall include the following sections:

- **7.1 Vision:** describe the State's vision for rail transportation for the 5 and 20-year time horizons, as well as a longer-term vision. Describe how the vision would meet the State's goals for a multimodal transportation system and achieve the intended role for rail in the State's transportation system.
- **7.2 Program Coordination:** describe how the State's long-term vision integrates with other transportation planning efforts, including the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan, the National Rail Plan, the State rail plans of neighboring States, and national and regional multi-state rail plans, as appropriate. Address how the vision meets National defense and emergency transportation requirements.
- **7.3 Rail Agencies:** describe any planned State rail agency organizational changes and proposed policy or legislative changes and new programs within the 5 and 20-year time horizons.
- **7.4 Program Effects:** Describe as specifically as possible the effects of the passenger and freight rail elements in the 5 and 20-year plans on:
 - 1) The State's transportation system.
 - 2) Public and private benefits that exist and are anticipated with the 5 and 20-year plans and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits. [§ 22705(b)(2)(A), (B)]
 - 3) Rail capacity and congestion by corridor. [§ 22705(b)(3)(B)]
 - 4) Transportation system capacity, congestion, and safety, including the effects on highway, aviation, and maritime modes. [§ 22705(b)(3)(C)]
 - 5) Environmental, economic, and employment conditions [§ 22705(b)(3)(E), (F)], including energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
 - 6) Distribution of benefits to regions (regional balance). [§ 22705(b)(3)(D)]

7.5 Passenger Element

7.5.1 Describe how passenger rail capital projects were analyzed for their effects on:

- Projected ridership, passenger miles traveled, modal diversion from highway and air travel, revenue, and operating expenses associated with existing, 5 and 20-year passenger rail services in aggregate and broken down by commuter, intercity and high-speed rail projects. [§ 22705(b)(3)(G)]
- Livability, including land use changes and improvements to walkability.
- 7.5.2 Capital Financing Plan: describe the 5 and 20-year financing plans for capital expenditures associated with the project lists including potential funding sources, capital costs required both initially and in subsequent years to maintain a state-of-good-repair and to recapitalize as necessary to sustain the initially proposed level of service or higher levels of service. Present the estimates for capital expenditures annually in year of expenditure cost. Specify the strategy for using grants, loans, private activity bonds (PABs), public-private partnerships (P3s), or other finance mechanisms for each project.
- 7.5.3 Operating Financing Plan: Describe the 5 and 20-year financing plans for operating deficits associated with the State's publicly-financed passenger rail services, including funding sources.
- 7.5.4 Describe the public and private economic benefits that exist and are anticipated with the 5 and 20-year plans and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits. [§ 22705(b)(2)(B)]

7.6 Freight Element

- 7.6.1 Financing Plan: describe 5 and 20-year capital financing plans for public and private investments in freight rail (Class I, II and III) capital expenses associated with the project lists in section 7.8 exclusive of operating and maintenance costs. If there are publicly-financed freight rail services in the State, an operating financing plan for any operating deficits (with funding sources) will need to be included and public capital contributions estimated annually in year of expenditure cost. Specify the strategy for using grants, loans, PABs, P3s, or other finance mechanisms for each project.
- 7.6.2 Describe the public and private economic effects that exist and are anticipated with the 5 and 20-year plans and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits. [§ 22705(b)(2)(B)]
- **7.7 Rail Studies and Reports:** Describe existing and needed planning studies to: develop corridor service plans for passenger rail (including high speed rail) [§ 22705(a)(11)]; develop coordinated regional rail policies and plans; evaluate freight operations and policies; address economic, environmental, or safety topics; or address other rail system topics. List all planned studies organized by rail corridor for the next 5 years and provide the following information for each study:

- 1) Title.
- 2) Short description of study.
- 3) Estimated total cost by year in current year dollars.
- 4) Estimated completion date (year and quarter).

7.8 Passenger and Freight Rail Capital Projects: List all selected projects organized by rail corridor for the next 5 years and another list for years 6-20 that present the following information by project:

- 1) Title.
- 2) Short project description, including the need it addresses.
- 3) Estimated total capital cost, by year, in year of expenditure dollars.
- 4) Non-public involvement and identify sources of funds.
- 5) Non-Federal public cost and identify sources of funds.
- 6) Federal cost.
- 7) Estimated impact, by year, on operating subsidy requirements for the affected service(s).

Note: FRA recognizes that specific dollar estimates for individual projects in the LRSIP are not likely to be available. However, States should consider as early and specifically as possible the public and private benefits of LRSIP projects.

Chapter 8. Coordination and Review [§ 22705(a)(7)]

Objective: Indicate how stakeholders were involved in the development and coordination of the LRSIP component of the State rail plan.

- 1) Describe the approach to public and agency participation in the development of the State rail plan including public noticing, opportunities for public and agency participation, and how comments were accepted.
- 2) Describe how the State rail plan was coordinated with neighboring States with respect to facilities and services that cross State boundaries.
- 3) Address how the public, rail carriers, commuter and transit authorities operating in, or affected by rail operations within the State, units of local government, and other interested parties were involved in the preparation and review of the State Rail Plan. [§ 22705(a)(7)]
- 4) In general, describe issues raised during the preparation of the State Rail Plan and how they were addressed. [§ 22705(a)(7)]
- 5) Describe how recommendations made by participants such as railroads, agencies, authorities, and municipalities within the State, or in the region in which the State is located, were appropriately considered and presented in this Rail Plan. [§ 22705(a)(7)]

6) Describe how the State coordinates State rail planning with other State transportation planning programs and activities including those conducted under Section 135 of Title 23.



VI. Preparation and Revision of State Rail Plans

States that completed State rail plans before the date of enactment of PRIIA, October 16, 2008, that substantially meet the requirements of this section as determined by FRA (acting for the Secretary of Transportation), will be deemed accepted and eligible for capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501. Because State rail plans must be updated at least every five years, they will be reviewed by FRA on a rolling basis.

Further, for State rail plans that are completed after the enactment of PRIIA and prior to this issued guidance, FRA will adopt the conditions noted above for those plans completed prior to the enactment of PRIIA. FRA will deem those plans that substantially meet the requirements of this section of PRIIA accepted and eligible for capital grants under Sections 301, 302 and 501.

A. Coordination with FRA

FRA's aim is to provide technical assistance and work with States throughout the State rail plan development and review process. State rail plans that are created through cooperative grant agreements with the FRA are developed with ongoing technical guidance from FRA staff. This allows States to receive comments from the FRA at critical points in the plan development process. FRA will provide technical assistance to any State developing a State rail plan and all States are encouraged to submit a draft final State rail plan to FRA for comment before submitting the final State rail plan. FRA encourages this practice in order to streamline the State rail plan review process.

B. State Approval

In the final stages of preparing a rail plan, the SRPAA shall approve a final draft State rail plan for submission to FRA. If the plan does not meet the minimum requirements, FRA will send a letter to the State describing the deficiencies. In order to become eligible for grants available under the Act, the State must make the necessary revisions, approve and resubmit an improved final draft State rail plan that addresses the deficiencies noted by FRA. Upon confirmation from FRA that the minimum requirements have been met, the SRPAA may finalize the rail plan and notify FRA.

C. Submission to FRA

When a final draft State rail plan has been approved by the designated SRPAA, one electronic and one printed copy shall be submitted for review to FRA. Electronic and hard copies should be sent to the appropriate FRA Regional Manager. A list of the Regional Managers and their contact information is available at http://www.fra.dot.gov/. FRA, acting for the Secretary, will confirm the State rail plan meets the minimum requirements established in the Act and described in this guidance.

D. FRA Review

FRA will notify a State once it has received its State rail plan. Following notification, FRA will review the plan to ensure that it is responsive to the minimum requirements. FRA will inform the State if its plan meets the minimum requirements or if there are deficiencies not more than 90 days after receipt of the document.

Once FRA determines that the State rail plan meets all minimum requirements, the agency will inform the State by issuing a letter from the Federal Railroad Administrator or his designee. The letter may contain recommendations that could be addressed in the next version of the State rail plan. This letter can be included in the final State rail plan document to indicate the document has been reviewed by FRA for PRIIA compliance.

States submitting rail plans for FRA review that do not meet the minimum requirements will receive a letter describing any deficiencies.

E. State Rail Plan Updates

PRIIA requires that States revise and resubmit to USDOT a State-approved plan no less frequently than once every 5 years. However, States should consider completing State rail plan updates on a regular cycle timed to coincide with other statewide and metropolitan planning efforts. When preparing updated plans States should consider:

- A response to FRA recommendations on previously submitted updates, revisions, amendments, or the original State Rail Plan.
- An update of information in the previous plan, which is no longer accurate as a result of plan implementation, action by a government entity or railroad, or changed conditions.
- Updates to rail system maps and rail line descriptions that should include the operating carrier and the location of the freight, commuter, and intercity passenger routes.

Appendix 1: Additional Data Requirements with Corresponding Element in Standardized Format

Element	Required Data	Suggested Data Source/Notes
1.2	 Describe the percentage of freight tonnage and value of goods shipped over 500 miles within, to, or from the State by rail. Freight rail tonnage by major commodity that is originated, terminated, originated & terminated within the State, or overhead (passed-through). Intercity passenger rail mode share of intercity trips if statewide travel data is available. Commuter rail mode share in metropolitan areas that have such service. State population with access to passenger rail service by population of Census block groups within a 10- and 30-mile radius of rail stations. (FRA encourages States to investigate other measures of accessibility, including the population within a 30-minute drive of a rail station and the population within a 30-minute transit ride of a rail station). Also, present the accessibility factor above in terms of service frequency. For example, calculate the population within 10 and 30 miles of stations with trains departing in each direction less than once per day, at least once per day, at least twice per day, at least four times per day, and at least 10 times per day. 	Waybill sample; Commodity flow survey tables.
2.1	 Inventory and map all rail lines (operating and inactive) with description by line of: STB railroad classification of owner railroad. Signal type data (e.g. TWC, DTC, ABS, CTC, ATS, ATC, PTC, etc.). Significant clearance and weight restrictions. Rail line route mileage categorized by number of main tracks and track classification. Rail-banked lines that may be considered for service reintroduction. Passenger services including passengers per route and station, trains per day, train miles and passenger miles). Locations of intermodal connections for both passenger and freight services, including type of mode(s) available for connections. Additional performance measures could include: Safety and Security – number of at-grade crossings and those on hazmat routes. Financial/Economic – public sector operating costs, taxes paid, jobs, economic development impacts. 	FRA Bridge Inspections; FHWA Freight Analysis Framework.
2.2	Inventory of intercity and commuter passenger stations including:	
	Service frequency for each station, by type of service and route.	

	Station location type (i.e., urban, suburban, rural/small community, park	
	 & ride, airport). Local transit and intercity bus connections, parking availability, and assessment of non-motorized transportation access including bicycle parking facilities. 	
	Inventory of freight terminals including freight intermodal transfer facilities, seaports, and their rail capacity, including:	
	 Capacity of freight terminal by commodity type (bulk material, containers, autos, etc.). Current operational level of the freight terminals in similar terms. 	
2.3	Minimum passenger service objectives in terms of:	
	 Service frequency and train miles. Capacity (Seat Miles). On-time performance (OTP). 	
2.4	 On-time performance (OTP), delays and causes of delay by route Passengers and passenger-miles by route and by station for the previous 1, 2, 5, and 10 years. Statewide ridership (intrastate). Passenger train-miles operated. Passenger-miles/Train-mile (intrastate). Operating and maintenance costs for state-supported services. Farebox recovery ratio for existing state-supported services. State operating assistance for existing state-supported services. Operating subsidy/rider for commuter rail at the route and system-wide level. 	Much of this information is available in Amtrak's "State Fact Sheets" and Amtrak monthly/annual reports.
2.6	 A comprehensive public funding list to include public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State revenue, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development. 	
2.7	 Amtrak's salary and expenditures per State. Statewide land use and transportation plans. Local land use and transportation plans - especially Station Area Plans - for cities and regions with existing and proposed passenger rail service. Analysis of potential land use policies and strategies for areas near stations. Vehicle Miles of Travel Saved. Greenhouse Gases Reduced. 	Amtrak salary and expenditure data is available in Amtrak's "State Fact Sheets".
3.1	Current statewide population and employment with growth projections for the 20-year horizon.	
3.2	Gross State Product by industry sector.	

	Freight tonnage by mode and commodity.	
3.3	 Current VMT and PMT growth for statewide intercity travel. Passenger demand by intrastate and regional interstate city pairs from statewide transportation demand models or FRA's sketch-planning toolkit. 	Statewide travel demand model, independent modeling, or FRA sketch-planning tool.
7.4	To assess costs and benefits consider traditional costs (e.g. capital, credit for residual value, operations and maintenance) with traditional benefits (e.g. revenue, travel time savings, safety improvements, congestion reduction), and wider economic benefits (e.g. commuter/freight capacity improvements, state of good repair, productivity improvement) of providing rail service in a given corridor or network.	

Appendix 2: State Rail Plan Content Requirements

These are the requirements of 49 U.S.C. Section 22705:

- (a) In General.—Each State rail plan shall, at minimum, contain the following:
 - (1) An inventory of the existing overall rail transportation system and rail services and facilities within the State and an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the State's surface transportation system.
 - (2) A review of all rail lines within the State, including all freight rail lines, intercity passenger rail lines, commuter rail lines, and proposed high-speed rail corridors and significant rail line segments not currently in service.
 - i. Contain an illustration of the State's entire rail system to include: (1) the operating carrier or carriers, (2) location of freight, intercity passenger, high-speed, and commuter rail service, and (3) rail rights-of-way that have been preserved for potential reactivation;
 - ii. Contain most recent available data on freight rail tonnage originated and terminated within the State by major commodity;
 - iii. Contain information on the use of passenger and freight rail facilities.
 - (3) A Statement of the State's passenger rail service objectives, including minimum service levels, for rail transportation routes.
 - (4) A general analysis of rail's transportation, economic, and environmental impacts in the State, including congestion mitigation, trade and economic development, air quality, land use, energy-use, and community impacts.
 - (5) A long-range rail investment program for current and future freight and passenger infrastructure in the State that meets the requirements of subsection (b) [of this section "Long-Range Service and Investment Program"].
 - (6) A statement of public financing issues for rail projects and service in the State, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development.
 - (7) An identification of rail infrastructure issues within the State that reflects consultation with all relevant stakeholders.
 - (8) A review of the major passenger and freight intermodal connections and facilities within the State, including seaports, and prioritized options to maximize service integration and efficiency between rail and other modes of transportation within the State.
 - (9) A review of publicly funded projects within the State to improve rail transportation safety and security, including all major projects funded under section 130 of title 23.
 - (10) A performance evaluation of passenger rail services operating in the State, including possible improvements in those services and a description of strategies to achieve those improvements.

- (11) A compilation of studies and reports on high-speed rail corridor development within the State not included in a previous plan under this subchapter, and a plan for funding any recommended development of such corridors in the State.
- (12) A statement that the State is in compliance with Title 49 United States Code Section 22102 as follows:
 - "A State is eligible to receive financial assistance under this chapter only when the State complies with regulations the Secretary of Transportation prescribes under this chapter and the Secretary decides that:
 - (1) the State has an adequate plan for rail transportation in the State and a suitable process for updating, revising, and modifying the plan;
 - (2) the State plan is administered or coordinated by a designated State authority and provides for a fair distribution of resources;
 - (3) the State authority
 - a. is authorized to develop, promote, supervise, and support safe, adequate, and efficient rail transportation;
 - b. employs or will employ sufficient qualified and trained personnel;
 - c. maintains or will maintain adequate programs of investigation, research, promotion, and development with opportunity for public participation; and
 - d. is designated and directed to take all practicable steps (by itself or with other State authorities) to improve rail transportation safety and reduce energy use and pollution related to transportation.
 - (4) the State has ensured that it maintains or will maintain adequate procedures for financial control, accounting, and performance evaluation for the proper use of assistance provided by the United States Government."

As a minimum requirement noted in subsection (a)(5) for:

- (b) Long-Range Service and Investment Program
 - (1) Program content. A long-range rail investment program included in (a)(5) above shall, at minimum include the following matters:
 - "(A) A list of any rail capital projects expected to be undertaken and supported in whole or in part by the State.
 - "(B) A detailed funding plan for those projects.
 - (2) Project List Content. The list of rail capital projects shall contain-
 - "(A) a description of the anticipated public and private benefits of each such project; and
 - "(B) a statement of the correlation between
 - "(i) public funding contributions for the projects; and
 - "(ii) public benefits.

- (3) Considerations for Project List.—In preparing the list of freight and intercity passenger rail capital projects, a State rail transportation authority should take into consideration the following matters:
 - "(A) Contributions made by non-Federal and non-State sources through user fees, matching funds, or other private capital involvement.
 - "(B) Rail capacity and congestion effects.
 - "(C) Effects on highway, aviation, and maritime capacity, congestion, or safety.
 - "(D) Regional balance.
 - "(E) Environmental impact.
 - "(F) Economic and employment impacts.
 - "(G) Projected ridership and other service measures for passenger rail projects.



Appendix 3: PRIIA Capital Grant Programs

PRIIA authorized three new capital grant programs to fund the development of high-speed and intercity passenger rail:

- High Speed Rail Corridor Development (Section 501 of PRIIA, Public Law 110-432, Division B, codified at 49 U.S 26101 et seq.)
- Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance (Section 301 of PRIIA, codified at 49 U.S.C. Chapter 244)
- Congestion Grants (Section 302 of PRIIA, codified at 49 U.S.C 24105)

Each of these sections includes distinct eligibility criteria and other provisions, but the three programs are closely related and address several overlapping activities. To streamline administration of these provisions, FRA consolidated the three authorizations into a single program, the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program, as described further in the April 2009 *Vision for High-Speed Rail in America* and the June 2009 notice of funding availability.

Projects and programs eligible for HSIPR program capital grants and general project selection criteria are summarized below:

- High Speed Rail Corridor Development and Capital Assistance for Intercity Passenger Rail Service grants (Sections 501 and 301) can be used for acquiring, constructing, improving, or inspecting equipment, track, track structures, or facilities for the primary benefit of high-speed or intercity passenger rail service; expenses incidental to the acquisition or construction (including designing, engineering, locating, surveying, mapping, environmental studies, and acquiring rights-of-way); payments for the capital portions of rail trackage rights agreements; highway rail grade crossing improvements related to high speed or intercity passenger rail service; expenses for mitigating environmental impacts; communications and signalization improvements; relocation assistance; acquiring replacement housing sites; and acquiring, constructing, relocating, and rehabilitating replacement housing.
 - High-Speed Rail Corridor Development Grants can be used to fund capital projects listed above on eligible corridors including the ten high-speed rail corridors previously designated by the Secretary of Transportation.
 - Capital Assistance for Intercity Passenger Rail Service grants can also be used for rehabilitating, remanufacturing or overhauling rail rolling stock and facilities used primarily in intercity passenger rail; to cover the costs associated with developing State rail plans; and the first-dollar liability costs for insurance related to the provision of intercity rail.
- Congestion Capital Grants (Section 302) can be used for facilities, infrastructure, and equipment for high priority rail corridor projects necessary to reduce congestion or facilitate ridership growth in intercity passenger rail transportation. Eligible projects would be those

identified by Amtrak to reduce congestion or facilitate ridership growth in heavily traveled rail corridors, those identified by the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to improve on-time performance and reliability, and those designated by USDOT as meeting the purpose of the program and being sufficiently advanced so as to be ready for implementation.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Public Law 111-5) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) provided the first substantial appropriations for the HSIPR program. However, these appropriation bills waived the PRIIA requirement that proposed projects must be included in a State rail plan to be eligible for federal funding. In the notice of funding availability, FRA provided detailed grant application instructions and project selection criteria that could be used as interim guidance for States in developing intercity passenger rail plans.⁴

⁴ Federal Register/Vol 74, No. 119/Tuesday, June 23, 2009/Notices at http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/rrdev/fr_hsipr_guidance.pdf